



Transportation

February 2016 Newsletter

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Division 5

COUNTIES SERVED | Durham, Franklin,
Granville, Person, Vance, Wake, Warren

NCDOT Works Through Winter Weather



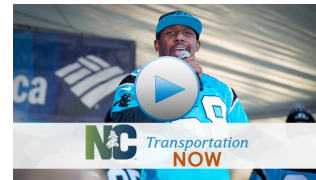
NCDOT crews and equipment made their way from Pasquotank County to Asheville during the storm.

Statewide, NCDOT employees worked night and day during a storm that brought snow, sleet, freezing rain and ice across North Carolina Jan. 22 through Jan. 24. As of Feb. 1, over 2,275 employees across North Carolina spread over 2.2 million gallons of brine, with 1,604 NCDOT trucks/ graders and 665 contractor trucks. Additionally, they used over 75,000 tons of salt and over 27,000 tons of sand/salt mix.

Crews worked 12-hour alternating shifts throughout the storm and over the weekend, plowing roads, sawing and clearing fallen trees from roads and salting bridges and overpasses throughout the state.

Places in eastern counties that saw lesser impacts from the storm even sent crews to help harder hit areas, sharing resources and helping clear roadways in the western part of the

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[Watch this week's N.C. Transportation](#)

state. Maintenance crews from Washington and Pasquotank counties arrived in the Asheville area Saturday night to assist with response efforts there. Twelve trucks from Sampson County arrived in Raleigh Sunday, and NCDOT transferred additional equipment from the coastal area to Durham County. The NCDOT State Farm Safety Patrol had helped more than 200 disabled motorists and assisted in 215 wrecks statewide as of Sunday morning.

For more information about how NCDOT works before, during and after the storm, [click here](#).

Major Durham Freeway Traffic Shift for East End Connector Planned to Start Feb. 12

Motorists who use the southbound Durham Freeway (N.C. 147) will be dealing with a long-term traffic shift, starting the night of Friday, Feb. 12, weather permitting. That is when the contractor for the East End Connector project plans to move southbound traffic to new lanes that have been built down the median of the highway between south of Briggs Avenue (Exit 10) and just north of Ellis Road (Exit 8). Drivers will continue to have two southbound lanes in both directions.

The shift is expected to be in place until about mid-June. It will allow the contractor to safely remove, regrade and stabilize the current southbound section in that area to prepare it for new concrete pavement. Other work will include constructing part of a new bridge on the southbound side of the road and widening a couple of the existing bridges.

Southbound motorists need to pay attention to the new pattern and use extra caution while traveling through the work zone, as the new traffic alignment will include barrier rails on both sides of the roadway in some sections.

Once work on the southbound side wraps up and traffic returns to its original pattern, the northbound lanes will shift into the median lanes for about another four months for similar work on that side.

The shift location is where a new interchange for the Connector is being built for the new 3.9-mile interstate-standard road that will link the freeway and U.S. 70. It will also upgrade U.S. 70 to a freeway between Pleasant Drive and N.C. 98. Once open it is expected to add the I-885 route designation.

Although this is the only major shift planned for the \$142-million dollar for the time being, drivers need to continue to be alert to possible day or night lane closures along highways linked to the

project to support construction activities. Lane closures along the Durham Freeway are allowed between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. Sunday through Thursday nights, and 8 p.m. to 10 a.m. on Friday and Saturday evenings. Similar closures are permitted on U.S. 70 from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m. Sunday through Thursday nights, 8 p.m. to 9 a.m. Friday evenings, and 8 p.m. to 11 a.m. on Saturday nights. Lane closures on other roads within the work area can happen anytime except 6 to 9 a.m. and 4 to 7 p.m. on weekdays.

The East End Connector, underway since April 2015, will provide a direct connection between the Durham Freeway and north of the U.S. 70/N.C. 98 intersection, completing a link between I-85 and I-40, the Triangle Expressway and U.S. 1 in southern Wake County. It is expected to promote economic development in areas along the I-85 corridor toward Virginia by improving access for people and goods between Durham and counties north of the city to major employment and retail centers, including Research Triangle Park, Raleigh-Durham International Airport and Wake County.

Another benefit will be alleviating congestion on the Durham Freeway through downtown Durham. It will also help divert traffic off local roads such as U.S. 15/501, which is often used as a connection between I-85 and I-40, as well as Roxboro, Mangum, Gregson and Duke streets in Durham.

The Connector is expected to open in 2019.

Division 5 Crews Contend with First Major Winter Weather Event of the Season



Crews from Sampson County arrive in Wake County to help with the winter weather clean up.

The relatively mild winter residents of Division 5 counties had enjoyed came to a halt late last month, with the first significant

impact from winter weather of the season. However, DOT crews in Wake, Durham, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance and Warren counties were ready for the challenge.

Because the winter storm was forecasted for several days, crews were able to get more than 400,000 gallons of brine down on the interstates, major roadways, bridges and overpasses ahead of time to help prevent snow and ice from sticking to the road surface. And there was even a chance to let crews get in some rest before the marathon battle to clear roads began early Friday morning.

The length of the winter weather, from early Friday, Jan. 22 through Saturday night, Jan. 23, meant crews handling the interstates and other major roads that top the priority list for road clearance, had to repeatedly go back over those roads until they were cleared for good. Then came the other U.S. routes, N.C. highways and secondary roads.

"We have some of the hardest working employees of any workforce," said Division 5 Maintenance Engineer Battle Whitley. "They endured long, stressful, tiring hours to keep our state's transportation system serving the function of moving people and goods from place to place."

Wake County has the largest state road system of any county in the state at more than 14,300 lane miles. So it took a lot of big numbers to handle weather impacts ranging from four to six inches of snow and sleet in the northwest section (Person and parts of Granville counties) to the quarter-inch of ice that hit sections of Wake County. The effort was led by 275 DOT employees across the division, using 159 trucks with plows and spreaders, as well as 26 graders and 11 front-end loader vehicles. Adding to that were 68 contracted trucks, graders and loaders. There was even help from eastern DOT divisions that escaped the winter weather, with 11 trucks from Craven County and nearby counties helping efforts in Durham County and 12 trucks sent to Wake County from Sampson County.

"It makes me proud to work for an organization where employees are willing to travel away from home to lend a helping hand to co-workers they might have never met," said Whitley.

All that equipment was used to help spread more than 12,000 tons of salt and 3,000 tons of salt/sand mix on division roads.

And even Mother Nature played a key role, as rapidly warmer temperatures in the days that followed the storm helped melt away snow and ice from neighborhood roads and enabled NCDOT crews to clear other roads to get life back to normal for

the residents that call Division 5 home.

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